

GOOD-FRIDAY,

A

P O E M.

By the Rev. M. Dawson, Rector of Bedale Yorkshire

Christ his own Self bare our Sins in his own Body, that we
being Dead unto Sin, should live unto Righteousness.

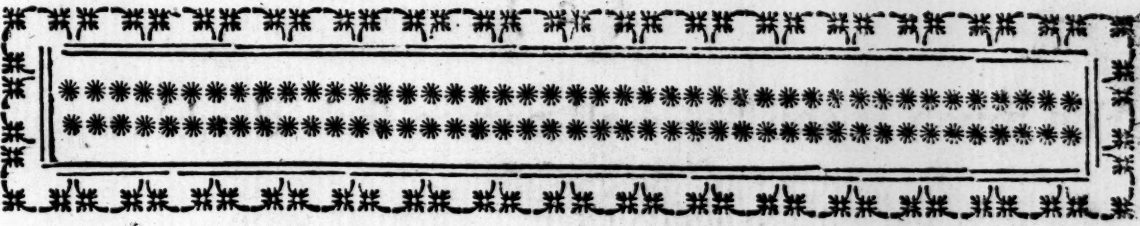
1. Pet. 2. 24.

*The gift of John Theakston, of the City of York,
Coroner - to Rob. Wise - July 21st 1783*

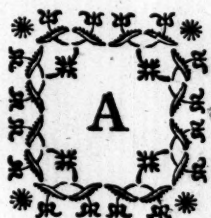
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R I S E, my soul! take hence thy rapid
flight,

And on the mount of Calvary alight!—

There thankful view, nor tempt the maze to scan,
G O D dying to redeem his creature, man!

Hear him, in natures last sad moments cry,

Father, receive my soul!—and bending die.—

Too

Too much is this!——all nature feels the blow,
 And gives dread tokens of her inmost woe.
 Unusual darkness o'er the heav'ns is spread;—
 The sun astonish'd hides his radiant head;—
 The silver moon her borrow'd light denies;
 While every star in wild amazement flies.
 Angels themselves neglect their joys above,
 Eager to view this mystic scene of love;
 And, as on Christ with ardent eyes they gaze,
 Mix notes of sorrow with their hymns of praise.—
 Nor heav'n alone laments her dying God:—
 Earth (which he hallow'd while on earth he trod)
 Trembles with horror in her every cave,
 And bursts the solid cearments of the grave.

Ev'n

Ev'n death compell'd resigns his long-held prey;
 Bodies new-rai'd appear in open day;
 Thy frightened streets, Jerufalem, they tread,
 Who scarcely know't the living from the dead.—
 No more religious mysteries avail;
 Shook is the temple;—rent the facred veil.—
 Malice, no longer able to revile,
 Pale, and aghaft, forgets her taunting ftyle.
 Sarcaftic questions and opprobrious Jeers,
 Ceafe to offend a dying Saviour's ears,
 While all in trembling expectation ftay,
 And anxious wait the quick return of day.—
 The day returns!——but, Oh! no day to me,
 Whofe heart is darken'd by iniquity!——

No day to me, each boisterous passion's slave!—
 No hope from heaven! no shelter in the grave!—
 Yet rouse my soul! thy flowing grief restrain!
 And calm to thought the wildness of my brain!
 On that dire tree thy looks attentive bend,
 Where bleeds thy God, thy Saviour, and thy Friend.
 Behold his head majestically rest,
 In sullied honor, on his bleeding breast!
 See those pale hands, for ever doing good,
 Drench'd in the Streams of his too precious blood!
 Gaze on those feet, that ne'er were known to stray,
 Or quit the righteous for the sinful way!—
 Silent that tongue whence truths celestial flow'd!
 Clos'd are those eyes, where soft compassion glow'd!

Thorn

Thorn crown'd his brow; spear pierc'd his naked side;
 With livid gore his mangled body dy'd!—
 And all for him, whose guilt-envenom'd mind,
 On every act of cruelty refin'd;
 The painful wreath in barb'rous mock'ry wove
 Of his just claims to royalty above;
 While bitter taunts, and contumelious blows,
 Heighten'd his torments, and increas'd his woes.
 Thou too, my soul! tho' not self-conscious then,
 Or number'd yet amongst the sons of men,
 Didst share, thro' sin original, the guilt
 Of that just blood for man's salvation spilt.
 Thou too, my soul! tho' not self-conscious then,
 Or number'd yet amongst the sons of men,

Wast

Vast comprehended, by the eternal mind,
 In that great sacrifice, that sav'd mankind.
 But not coercive is the grace of heaven;
 Or to those heedless of its value given:
 For, tho' free mercy must the gift bestow,
 From free will only can acceptance flow.
 Nor will imperfect services suffice;
 Life-labour'd pray'rs, or fear-extorted sighs.
 'Tis not thy tear, hypocrisy, can please;
 No frigid vows will heaven's just wrath appease.
 'Tis not the pious purpose to reform,
 Insures our safety, and averts the storm;
 But faith with practice its twin-sister joyn'd,
 By heaven our guides to future bliss design'd.—

Faith

Faith ardent points to Jesus, and relies
 For God's acceptance on his sacrifice.
 Faith, ever active, no cold medium knows,
 But with a constant, warm, affection glows;
 In reason's scale the sacred doctrine weighs,
 And from conviction chearfully obeys.
 Faith new moulds nature on a larger plan,
 Above ev'n angels elevating man;
 The mind, by her with nobler notions fraught,
 Forgets its former narrowness of thought:
 The heart expanding glows, like heaven above,
 With universal charity and love:
 The soul its real pleasure learns to ground,
 Where real pleasure only can be found:

The

(8)

The whole man changes; and true faith the soul,
That moves, directs, and animates the whole.—
Thine be this faith, my soul! this practice thine!
Where christian virtues in full splendour shine:
Which heav'n approves, which vindicates thy claim,
And in the book of life enrolls thy name.

F I N I S.



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